

# Personal Stress Management

Carleton College

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*Presenter:*

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# The Stress Equation

$$\text{STRESS} = \frac{\text{Events} + \text{Thoughts} + \text{Behavior}}{\text{Mindful Response}}$$

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# Limbic System

- Something unexpected occurs, your limbic system is aroused
- Danger or Reward?
- If the brain perceives threat or danger (and there is no or minimal threat) the amygdala will be hijacked

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# Stress Hormones Cortisol

## Plus

- A quick burst of energy for survival reasons
- Heightened memory functions
- A burst of increased immunity
- Lower sensitivity to pain

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# Stress Hormones Cortisol

## Minus

- Impaired cognitive performance
- Suppressed thyroid function
- Blood sugar imbalances such as hyperglycemia
- Higher [blood pressure](#)

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# Stress Hormones Epinephrine/Adrenalin 1

During the fight-or-flight response, the adrenal gland releases epinephrine into the blood stream, along with other hormones like cortisol, signaling the

- heart to pump harder,
- increasing blood pressure,
- opening airways in the lungs,

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# Stress Hormones Epinephrine/Adrenalin 2

During the fight-or-flight response,

- narrowing blood vessels in the skin and intestine to increase blood flow to major muscle groups
- to enable the body to fight or run when encountering a perceived threat.

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# Being on a Regular Stress Alert

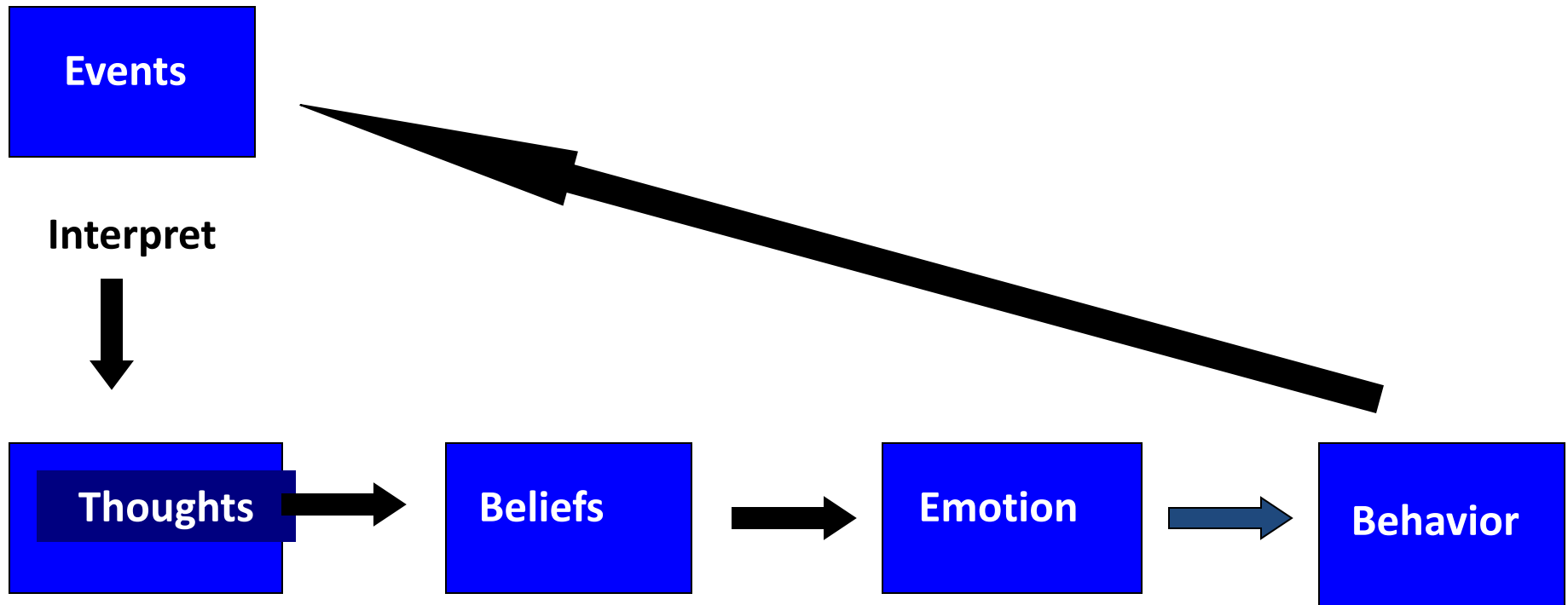
1. Lowers your immune system making you more at risk for pathogens and becoming ill
2. Reduces quality sleep
3. Reduces the ability to focus and to concentrate
4. Increases mood changes like depression, anxiety, and irritability
5. Increase intake of food and alcohol leading to increase weight and other possible complications

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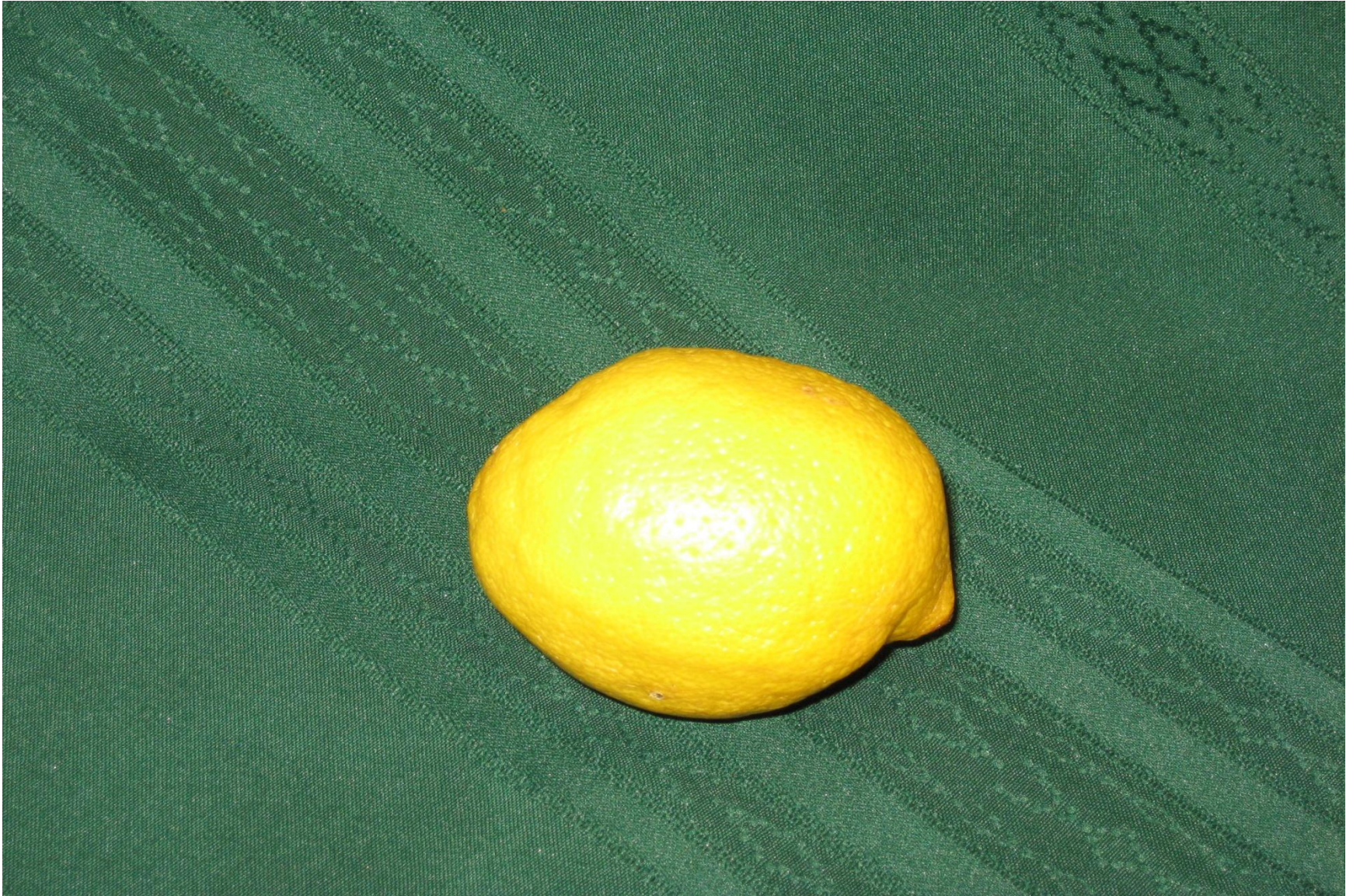




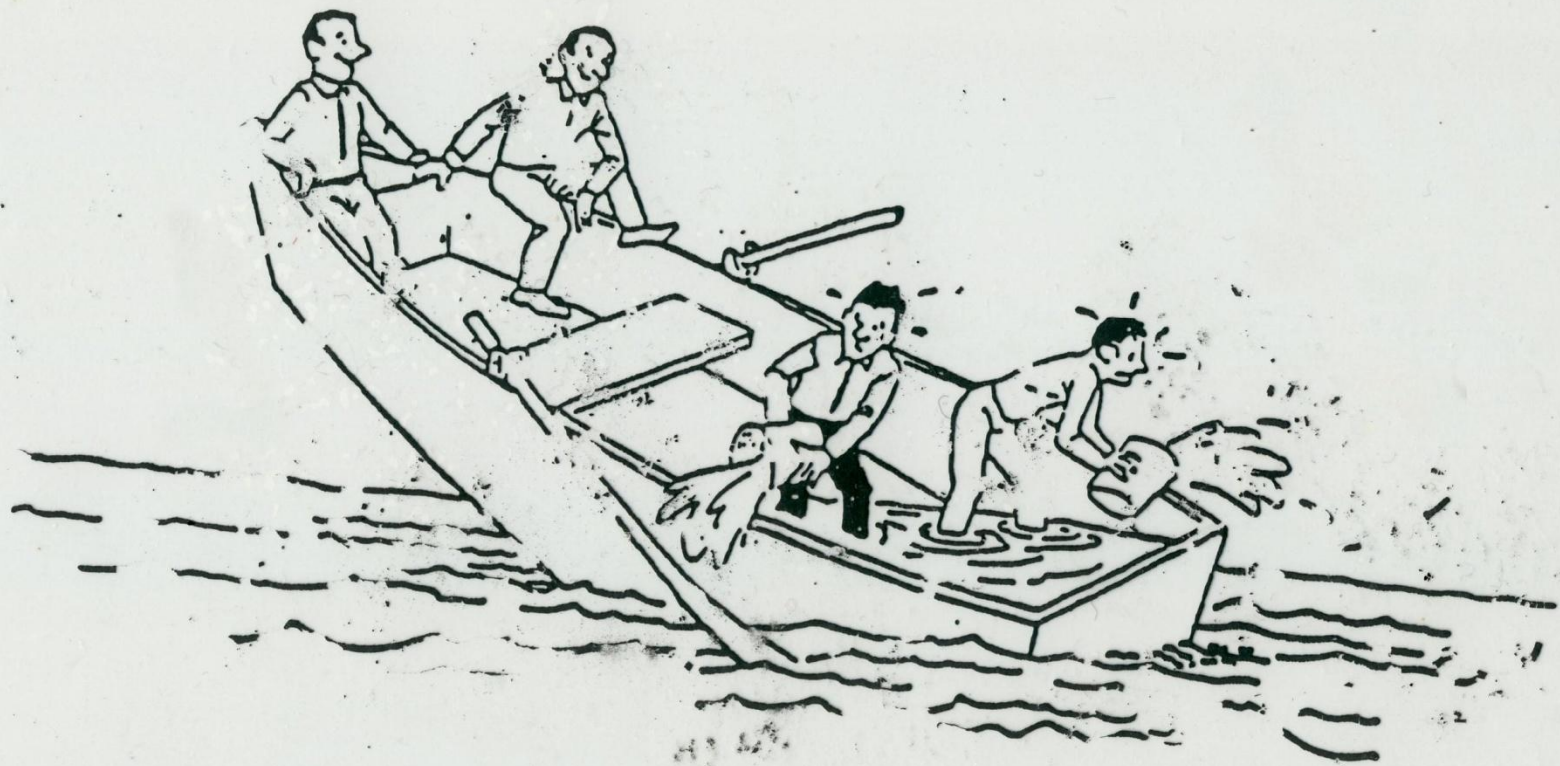
# What You Think Affects How You Feel

















**When you  
look at this  
picture what  
are your  
thoughts?**

EVENT	Automatic Thoughts and Feelings	Reframe
Person taking two parking spots	<i>Jerk; Selfish</i>	Perhaps he is selfish or another car was there and his was the only space available; he worked hard for this car and he wants to keep it from dings even though it impacts other people

# Stressor Identification and Analysis

## Three types of stressors:

- Stressors you can avoid
- Stressors you can modify
- Stressors you cannot avoid

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# Stressor Identification and Analysis

## WORK

## HOME

## GENERAL

My Boss  
Deadlines  
Customers  
Change  
Systems

The Children  
My Spouse  
Chores  
Arguments about  
money  
Neighbors Dog  
Father's health

Telephone  
Traffic  
Lack of time

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# Thought Management

## Developing A Low Stress Attitude

- Identify your critical tapes
- Examine all expectations
- Accept your strengths and weaknesses
- Recognize your accomplishments
- Keep setbacks in perspective
- Create positive affirmations

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# Event Management

## Organizational Skills

- Planning
- Organizing
- Delegating

## Interpersonal Skills

- Communicating
- Setting Limits
- Establishing Support (Again)

# Behavior Management:

## Establishing Stress Hardiness

- Nutrition
- Exercise
- Support Systems
- Relaxation

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# Stress Management Nutrition Guidelines

- Eat a variety of foods
- Avoid fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol
- Choose vegetables, fruits, grains
- Sugar in Moderation

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# Stress Management Nutrition Guidelines

- Salt and Sodium in Moderation
- Alcohol in Moderation
- Caffeine in Moderation
- Be an Informed Consumer

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# Stress Management Exercise Guidelines

- Choose an activity that is enjoyable
- Adopt a program that is realistic for you
- Consider a buddy/group for motivation
- Establish a reward system

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# Establish Support Systems

## Sources:

- Family
- Friends
- Work Network
- Community
- Professional Counselors/EAP



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# Relaxation Techniques

- ✦ Breathing
- ✦ Stretching
- ✦ Progressive Relaxation
- ✦ Visualization
- ✦ Meditation

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# Stopping the Worry Loop

- Quiet the Mind
- Create a “worry period.”
- Postpone your worry.
- Go over your “worry list” during the worry period.

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# Stopping the Worry Loop

## **Distinguish between solvable and unsolvable worries**

If a worry pops into your head, start by asking yourself whether the problem is something you can actually solve. The following questions can help:

- Is the problem something you're currently facing, rather than an imaginary what-if?
- If the problem is an imaginary what-if, how likely is it to happen? Is your concern realistic?
- Can you do something about the problem or prepare for it, or is it out of your control?

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# EAP Benefits Include

- 1-3 confidential counseling and referral visits
- Legal
- Budget Debt
- Financial Planning
- Wellness Coaching
- Work/Life Resources

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# Release the Endorphins



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# Activity: Pick a Partner

1. Best.....
2. Facial exercise
3. Blessings

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# Kids Instructions on Life

- Never trust a dog to watch your food. -Patrick, Age 10
- When you want something expensive, ask your grandparents. -Matthew, Age 12
- Never smart off to a teacher whose eyes and ears are twitching. -Andrew, Age 9

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# Kids Instructions on Life

- Never ask for anything that costs more than five dollars when your parents are doing taxes.  
-Carol, Age 9
- Never bug a pregnant mom. -Nicholas, Age 11
- When your dad is mad and asks you, "Do I look stupid?" don't answer him. Heather, Age 16

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You Can Touch the Dust  
But Please  
Don't Write in It



You Can Touch the Dust  
But Please  
Don't Write in It

**Sometimes I wake up  
grumpy....**

**Other times I let him/her  
sleep**

I Cleaned My House  
Yesterday,  
Wish You Could Have  
Seen It.

I Keep Losing Weight,  
But It Keeps Finding  
Me.

If it walks out  
of the refrigerator,  
its time to let it go.

